

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1597 without my signature.

While I strongly support comprehensive HIV prevention efforts, have signed legislation to facilitate access to clean needles, support increased stability of locally approved syringe exchange programs and provided increased funding for local HIV prevention and education efforts, I cannot support Assembly Bill 1597. This bill would make state funding for HIV prevention and education available for the purchase of needles, potentially limiting funding for other prevention and education activities.

Authorizing the use of state funds to purchase syringes, without appropriate local controls, including mechanisms for input from local law enforcement, and protections against the use of state funds to supplant private or local resources is not prudent.

For these reasons, I can not sign Assembly Bill 1597.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger